Government a total of 5,56,463 Allopathic doctors have been registered with the Medical Council of India. Besides, there are around six lakh Indian systems of Medicine and Homoeopathic doctors registered with their respective Councils. The norms for availability of doctors to the population in the country, has been recommended to be as 1:2000 by the Bhore Committee. As per the statistics worked out by the Medical Council of India the availability of Allopathic doctors is at present in the ratio of 1:1800. If the practitioners of Indian Systems of Medicines and Homoeopathy are also taken into account the ratio of availability of doctors to the population will work out much favourably. Though there is no shortage in the aggregate number of doctors produced, there is an imbalance in the availability of doctors between different regions in the country.

Plague cases in the country

†4096. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cases of plague have been detected in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures Government have taken for checking plague?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) After receiving information from 'Health Secretary', Government of Himachal Pradesh regarding admission of a few cases presenting with fever and haemoptysis (blood in sputum) in two hospitals of Shimla District and Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, a team of experts from National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi consisting of Epidemiologist, Microbiologist and Entomologist was deputed immediately to visit the affected areas of Shimla district from 14th to 17th February, 2002 for investigating the outbreak and to provide technical guidance to the State Government for containing the outbreak. Another team consisting of six public health experts was sent to Chandigarh on 22.2.2002. After the visit, the teams submitted their report, which confirmed the outbreak of febrile

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

illness with haemoptysis (blood in sputum) reported in Hatkoti Village of Jubbal-Kotkhai Block, Shimla District, as pneumonic plague. Out of the Sixteen cases of plague detected in Himachal Pradesh and the four suspected cases with plague like symptoms from Chandigarh and its adjoining areas, five have died and 15 have been discharged after recovery.

The following steps were taken to contain the outbreak in coordination with the State Government;

1. The emergency medical requirements of the Government of Himachal Pradesh were promptly met with.

2. Guidelines were issued to Health Authorities of Government of Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Punjab, Haryana and UT of Chandigarh on the following issues :

Strengthening of surveillance

Chemoprophylaxis to contacts

Quarantine of close contacts

Restriction of movement of persons in affected areas

Standard work precautions

Safe disposal of bodies of persons dying due to plague

3. Door to Door interaction with the population in the affected and adjoining village for dispensing antibiotics, obtaining information about the new cases and educating the people was conducted.

4. Fumigation of the patients' houses as well as the transport vehicles was carried out using Formalin (10%).

5. About 28,000 to 30,000 people, including doctors, paramedical personnel and health workers were provided with chemoprophylaxis.

6. Proper treatment of patients and isolation of cases in the hospitals.

7. Quarantine of close contacts.

8. IEC campaign focussing on restriction of mobility, immediate reporting the health facility in case of fever etc. and reassuring the public not to panic.